



# NEWS RELEASE

## WASHINGTON AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture • Olympia, WA

Ag Statistics Hotline: 1-800-435-5883 • [www.usda.gov/nass/wa/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/wa/)



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### WASHINGTON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS ASKED TO HELP TELL THEIR STORY

NASDA Enumerators representing USDA's Washington Agricultural Statistics Service are contacting local farmers and ranchers asking financial questions for the 2004 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) survey.

The study is being conducted during February and March. Producers will be asked for facts on production expenses, assets, liabilities, and operation characteristics. This helps serve the agricultural community in many ways:

- ▶ **FSA payments** are based on ARMS data to calculate benefits that totaled \$305.9 million in 2004.
- ▶ **Farm Bill** legislation, foreign trade rule modifications were based in part on ARMS data.
- ▶ **Federal grants** to our State and community are allocated based on per capita income projections from ARMS data and other sources.
- ▶ **Grower Associations** and elected representatives use the results to create and support farm policy—including estate tax reform—that promotes production agriculture.
- ▶ **Washington State University** uses the data to teach strategies for increasing productivity and efficiency on operations, and for retirement and succession planning.
- ▶ **Producers** use the data to determine the feasibility and profit gained by expanding or changing aspects of their operation.

During 2004, the USDA distributed to Washington producers \$173.8 million in price support payments, \$79.9 million in conservation funding, and \$23.6 million in disaster assistance payments. Data from the ARMS is used to measure the benefits of direct, counter-cyclical, and ad hoc emergency payments as producers continue to look to the marketplace for economic reward.

"Reliable, accurate descriptions of the current economic health of Washington's farms and ranches are crucial," said Ray Garibay, Director of Washington Agricultural Statistics Service, "especially when policymakers, farm organizations, analysts, local USDA agents, news media, farm suppliers, lenders, and others make decisions that affect growers."

Mr Garibay asked for participation in the survey saying "Please make the time to respond and be counted. It is similar to voting, but this time you vote with your participation to make the facts known".

All data collected is **confidential** and protected by law (U.S. Code, Title 7). Results will be published only in statistical totals so that no individual data can be discovered or calculated. *Farm Production Expenditures*, the first report with results from the survey, will be released in July 2005. For a copy of the finished report or to obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the Washington Agricultural Statistics Service website at [www.usda.gov/nass/wa/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/wa/) or call 1-800-435-5883.